

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0134759		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/23/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/30/2002
<b>Decision Date:</b>	08/19/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/17/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/13/2015

### HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:  
State(s) of Licensure: California, Indiana, New York  
Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal Medicine

### CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The injured worker is a 61-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 4/30/2002. The mechanism of injury was cumulative trauma. The injured worker was diagnosed as having left knee degenerative joint disease. There is no record of a recent diagnostic study. Treatment to date has included therapy and medication management. In a letter dated 4/20/2015, the injured worker complains of left knee pain and discomfort. Physical examination showed palpable crepitus and poor gait. The treating physician is requesting Hyalgan Injections, Left Knee, 5 times.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

**Hyalgan Injections, Left Knee, Qty 5 times:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Knee & Leg - Criteria for Hyaluronic acid or Hylan, Series of injections.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee section, Hyaluronic acid injections.

**Decision rationale:** Pursuant to the Official Disability Guidelines, Hyalgan injections left knee times five is not medically necessary. Hyaluronic acid injections are recommended as a possible option for severe osteoarthritis for patients with not responded adequately to recommended conservative treatments (exercise, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or Tylenol to potentially delay the replacement. The criteria for hyaluronic acid injections include, but are not limited to, patients experience significant symptomatic osteoarthritis but have not responded adequately to conservative pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment; documented objective (and symptomatic) severe osteoarthritis of the knee that may include bony enlargement, bony tenderness over the age of 50; pain interferes with functional activities; failure to adequately respond to aspiration and injection of intra-articular steroids; generally performed without fluoroscopy ultrasound; are not candidates for total knee replacement or failed previous knee surgery from arthritis repeat series of injections, if documented significant improvement for six months or more it may be reasonable to perform another series. Hyaluronic acid is not recommended for other indications such as chondromalacia patella, facet joint arthropathy, osteochondritis desiccans, patellofemoral arthritis, patellofemoral syndrome, etc. In this case, the injured worker's working diagnosis is left knee degenerative joint disease. The date of injury is April 30, 2002. Request for authorization is dated June 10, 2015. The medical record contains 28 pages. Documentation from a letter dated November 6, 2014 states the injured worker did reasonably well with prior hyalgan injections. There is no documentation with percentage improvement or objective functional improvement from the prior series of injections. Consequently, absent clinical documentation with percentage improvement, duration improvement and objective functional improvement from the prior series of hyaluronic acid injections, Hyalgan injections left knee times five is not medically necessary.